

TOP SECRET

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The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D. C. 20505

21 December 1978

The Honorable James T. McIntyre, Jr.
Director, Office of Management and Budget
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20503

Dear Jim,

In view of the fact that Harold, in his letter to you of the 10th, opened some new issues in the debate on our imaging satellite mix, I would like to make my position clear to you.

25X1 - Everyone agrees that for any given level of expenditure, we can obtain more performance capability through buying the [] system. I believe that it would be fiscally irresponsible to spend more money than we need to meet our needs unless there were other overriding considerations.

- One such consideration is technical performance and risk, including satellite weight. The National Reconnaissance Office had a panel of distinguished experts, headed by Dr. James Fletcher, study these questions over a period of months. They concluded that there is not a meaningful margin of difference between the two systems, but if anything, there is somewhat greater technical risk with []

25X1

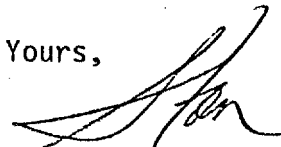
- Another consideration is growth potential. Here [] has the advantage. It is not an unmitigated advantage as it can well lead to increased costs. In addition, as we enter the era of the shuttle and the ability to revisit satellites on orbit, we may achieve growth by other means.

25X1

25X1 - Finally, with respect to possible Congressional action, I sincerely believe that there is a risk of delay in achieving the President's objective of a [] if we pursue the [] solution.

25X1

Yours,



25X1

STANSFIELD TURNER

25X1

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